

PSALM 2 IN HEBREWS¹

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Abstract

This contribution explores the occurrence of Ps 2:7 in Heb 1:5 and 5:5 on three levels, namely on a tradition-historical, a text-critical and a hermeneutical level. Its purpose is to trace particularly the origin and text form of Ps 2:7 in Hebrews. On the *traditional-historical level*, the importance of Ps 2 in the early Jewish and Christian traditions and the existing combination of Ps 2 + 2Sam 7 in 4Q174 [4QFlor] and in Heb 1:5-6 is discussed, as well as the combination of Ps 2 + Ps 110(109):4 in Heb 5:5. It is assumed and confirmed that the author of Hebrews knew this quotation via the early Jewish and Christian traditions. The author does not quote here from a so-called “Testimony Book”. On the *text-critical level*, the intra- and inter-textual readings are compared with each other. All readings are in agreement with each other. Some brief remarks are finally made on the *hermeneutical level* regarding the function and interpretation of the quotation in its new contexts in Heb 1:5 and 5:5. It takes a prominent position in Hebrews and is applied in terms of the exalted Jesus.

1. Introduction

The quotation from Ps 2:7 that occurs in Heb 1:5 and 5:5 found its way via the early Jewish and early Christian traditions into Hebrews. The quotation from Ps 2:7 is linked in Heb 1:5 with 2 Sam 7:14 and in Heb 5:5 with Ps 110:1. The following investigation runs mainly on two tracks, a *tradition-historical* level and on a *text-critical* level. This is done in order to establish the origin and the text form (*Vorlage*) of the quotation. Some concluding remarks, based on the results of the investigation, will be made about the *hermeneutical and methodological application* of the quotation.

¹ This is a revised version of a paper read at a conference on the “Old Testament in the New” in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, on 25-26 April 2003.

2. Tradition-Historical Level

Heb 1:5-14 presents a list of seven explicit quotations, testifying to the author's reasons why Jesus is different from the angels. It is a catena of scriptural citations, mostly from the Psalms, which opens with a rhetorical question (Τίτι γὰρ εἶπεν ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων;) and also ends with one (1:14), thus forming an *inclusio*.² It has been argued that these seven quotations are arranged in three groups of two plus the concluding last quotation (Lane 1998:24). The first group (1:5–6) consists then of two citations (Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14 / 1 Chr 17:13) which provide evidence for Jesus' divine sonship and thus points to the unique Father-Son relationship. "The first is a declaration *to* the Son ('You are my son') and the second a declaration *about* the Son ('I shall be a father to him and he shall be a son to me')" (Guthrie 1997). These two quotations are joined together on the basis of the term "Son" (υἱός) (Bateman 1995:17).

In Heb 5:5, however, the combination with Ps 110:4 is made on another basis. This time the connection is with the priesthood of Christ.

2.1 The combination Ps 2 + 2 Sam 7

The subject matter of Heb 1:1-5 agrees closely with that of 4Q174 [4QFlor]³ which quotes 2 Sam 7:10-14 (1 Chr 17:13ff), Ps 2:1 and Is 8:11 as part of its list.⁴ Ps 2:1 is last on the list there, preserved in 4Q174 [4QFlor] 10:18-19, and followed by its own *pesher*. It is not the same section (Ps 2:1) which is quoted in Heb 1:5, but the author of Hebrews, however, starts his list with the quotation from the same Psalm (Ps 2:7). On the other hand, 4Q174 [4QFlor] 10:11 starts with a quote from 2 Sam 7:10-14, which is listed secondly (2 Sam 7:14) by the author of Hebrews. Also De Waard pointed to the connection between Ps 2 and 2 Sam 7 in the Dead Sea scrolls and in Heb 1:5.⁵ It can be accepted that by the time that Hebrews was written, both

2 Guthrie (1994, 77) also pointed to this *inclusio*. Buchanan (1977) calls this a poem, but there is no evidence to accept this.

3 Dated at between ca. 50 B.C. to 70 A.D. Cf. Maiberg (1988, 93); also Bateman (1995, 11-27).

4 Cf. Lohse (1971, 255-259); also Allegro (1968, 53-55). Other texts quoted there are: Ex 15:17-18; Am 9:11; Ps 1:1 and Ez 37:23.

5 "In v 5 Ps 2,7 and 2 Sam 7,14 are combined, and the dossiers of Qumran now prove an existing combination of 2 Sam 7 and Ps 2. In addition, 2 Sam 7,14 refers to the Davidic Messiah in Heb 1,5b as well as in Qumran." (de Waard 1965, 81-82).

these texts were already familiar messianic texts (cf. Deissler 1989, 330; Lane 1998, 25; Goldsmith 1968, 321-323) that were brought together by the early Jewish tradition and built upon by the early Christian tradition. The presence of the same key word in two different texts could serve like a magnet, drawing those texts together (Lane 1998, 25; Thurston 1979, 22-39; Kistemaker 1961, 61-64, 78). The word υἱός is the key word which pulled Ps 2 and 2 Sam 7 together. This is a typical characteristic of the style of Hebrews to work with such *Stichwörter*, or key words.

Lane pointed out that the two quotations (Ps 2 and 2 Sam 7) "...have been artistically arranged so as to form a chiasm (A B B' A'). The first and last lines concern sonship and frame the second and third lines, which speak of paternity" (1998, 25).

The list of quotations starts then with a quotation from Ps 2:7 in Heb 1:5 which is quoted concerning the Son, in order to illustrate the exceptionality of Jesus Christ and his exalted position above that of the angels: υἱός μου εἶ σύ, ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε.

2.2 *The combination Ps 2 + Ps 110*

The author quoted Ps 2:7 later for a second time in his work at Heb 5:5, this time in order to praise Jesus' role as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. It seems like a strange application of Ps 2, as there is no reference to priesthood anywhere in the Psalm (so also Maiburger 1988, 117). The link between the two Psalms was probably made on the basis of the second person singular pronoun, "you" (σε at the end of Ps 2:7 and συ at the beginning of Ps 110:4), which identifies Jesus as the true Davidic King-Priest (cf. Bateman 1995, 17; Attridge 1989, 24-25; Lane 1998, cxxi). Another interesting link is made in this context with a quotation from Ps 110:4.⁶ Although this would be difficult to prove, it might not be out of place to assume that the author of Hebrews made this connection between Ps 2 and Ps 110 himself. Two factors might support this assumption. *Firstly*, it is interesting that the Hebrew word יְהוָה is to be found in both Ps 2:7 and in Ps 110:3 – the only places where the word occurs in the MT. The LXX translators, however, did not use the γεγέννηκά σε of Ps 2:7 again in Ps 109:3 (LXX), but rather ἐξεγέννησά σε. A possible connection based on the

6 According to Buchanan (1977, 13), the rabbis apparently also listed Ps 2:7-8; Ps 110:1 and Dn 7:13-14 together.

לַיהוָה or γεγέννηκά / ἐξεγέννησα of the contexts of Ps 2:7 and Ps 110:3 might be due to the author's knowledge of the broader context of Ps 110. *Secondly*, the fact that Ps 110:4 is only quoted in Hebrews and not in any other NT document, might also confirm that the author made the connection between the two Psalms himself.

It is thus clear that the author of Hebrews does not use the same quotation from the same Psalm in a uniform manner, but applies it in different ways (cf. Prinsloo 1948, 45).

2.3 Background regarding Psalm 2⁷

Ps 2 has no heading in the LXX.⁸ It belongs to the group of Psalms (1-41; 84-89; 90-150) that rather speak of "the Lord" (cf. West 1981, 440). It is one of the few Psalms (in the first of the five subdivisions/books of the Psalms) to which the name of David was not attached.⁹

Ps 2 (with Ps 45, 72 and 110), belongs to the group of "Royal Psalms" (see West 1981, 35; Vriezen & van der Woude 1980, 265; Schröger 1968, 35; Rösel 1995, 72) – i.e. those Psalms written about or by the king, which in some instances might refer to the specific occasion of the king's coronation. The author of Hebrews quotes from all except Ps 72.

It has been argued that the affirmation of Ps 2 "...should be understood as a formula of adoption asserting that, at his coronation, Israel's king of the Davidic line was made the heir of God's kingdom and was made his representative and ruler over the nations (Ps 2:8-9)" (Clements 1985, 39; also Noth 1966; Mettinger 1976, 259ff). The ideals of Davidic kingship came to be interpreted messianically in time (West 1981, 446). Deissler is of the opinion that Ps 2 has, therefore, its closest *Sitz-im-Leben* in the lively messianic expectation of the post-exilic congregation¹⁰, but follows the form and style of a "Königslied" (Deissler 1989, 330).

The theme of 2 Sam 7:16 (which was taken up in 2 Sam 23:1-7), is also reflected in many other references and allusions later in the OT literature, particularly in the royal Psalms themselves. A royal theology developed

7 Cf. Zenger 1986, 495-511.

8 This is striking, as this royal Psalm could have pointed to a connection with David (Rösel 1999, 89).

9 Others are Psalms 1, 10 and 33 (West 1981, 440).

10 An opinion fairly widely accepted. See also Becker 1989, 305.

which saw the king as God's adopted and anointed son¹¹ - "messiah of Jahweh" is the terminology that is used in Ps 2:2b – and mount Zion as God's holy hill and resting place forever, the throne of Jahweh. This hope continued within the messianic expectation of a future deliverer (cf. Becker 1989, 305; West 1981, 241), giving it an eschatological dimension (Becker 1989, 313).

The messianic-king therefore owes his status to God's covenant with him (2 Sam 23:5) – a covenant of which the terms ("I will be his father, and he shall be my son", 2 Sam 7:14)¹² are parallel to the terms of the covenant with Israel ("I...will be their God, and they shall be my people", Jer 31:33; *NBD*). It is important then, that in Ps 2:7 God addressed the *enthroned* King as his Son (Meier 1985, 177; Rösel 1999, 101) and that the Ps was interpreted messianically. Traces of this can also be seen in the later Syriac exegetical tradition, which accepted Ps 2 as one of four messianic Psalms (Jenner 2000, 155).

2.4 *The use of Psalm 2 in the early Jewish and Christian traditions*¹³

Jewish scribes had already reflected earlier deeply upon the question of the identity of the Son referred to at places such as Ps 2:7 (Clements 1985, 38; cf. Siegert 2001, 298). There is no clarity as to when exactly the messianic interpretation of this Psalm started, but it "...received a messianic interpretation very early on in its history of interpretation, in the Targum and, very prominently, in the New Testament" (Schaper 1995, 72). At the time of the early Christian church this hermeneutical bridge was already built (cf. Maiberger 1988, 106; Motyer 1999, 15). The *Psalms of Solomon*, a middle to late first century B.C. collection of 18 Greek Psalms that were once part of Codex Alexandrinus, testify (particularly in the 17th Psalm) to the fact that the Jews had set their hope on a future Davidic king. He is described as God's "anointed" (messiah) and stands in opposition to the non-Davidic Hasmonean dynasty (cf. Perkins 1985, 631). He is not a divine figure but a warrior-king who will subdue all other nations. Schaper (1995,

11 An adoption formula seems to occur in Ps. 2:7 ("you are my son"; cf. Gen. 48:5, "your two sons. . .are mine"). A similar phrase appears in an Elephantine adoption contract (Kraeling 1953).

12 The ritual formula itself is found in Ps 2:7 (Fuchs, s.v. σήμερον, *TDNT* VII, 271).

13 Cf. Maiberger 1988, 85-151.

75) already drew attention to the similarities between Ps Sol 17 and Ps 2 LXX:

Ps Sol 17,24 announces that the Messiah (cp. Ps Sol 17,21.32) will execute his punishment ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ, which constitutes an exact parallel to Ps 2,9 LXX. It also takes up the verb συντρίβειν used in Ps 2,9, just as much as Ps Sol 17,23 uses vocabulary evidently borrowed from the same verse (ὡς σκεύη/σκευὸς κεραμέως). The action taken by the Messiah leads up to judgment (Ps Sol 17,26.29), analogous to the course of Ps 2 that ends with a treat to the ‘kings’ (cp. the similar threat in Ps Sol 17,22).

Some elements in Ps Sol 17 thus also seem to be familiar when compared with Hebrews:

2.4.1 Kingship and Sonship motifs

ἀνάστησον αὐτοῖς τὸν βασιλέα αὐτῶν υἱὸν Δαβὶδ (“raise up unto them their king, the son of David”, Ps Sol 17:21); καὶ βασιλεὺς αὐτῶν χριστὸς κυρίου (“their king, the anointed of the Lord”, Ps Sol 17:32). In Hebrews, the “Son” is introduced as being at the right hand of God, the Supreme Power, in a position in which God himself has appointed him (Heb 1:3,13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). The quotations from Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14 testify to God who appointed Jesus as his Son (Heb 1:5)¹⁴ – applying the term “son” directly upon Jesus (Müller 1986, 234). He is therefore the “Son of God” (Heb 4:14; 5:8; 7:3; 10:29) and the “Christ” (Heb 3:6,14; 5:5; 6:1; 9:11,14,24,28; 10:10; 11:26,31; 13:8,21). God said of the Son that his kingdom would last for ever and ever (Heb 1:8, quoting Ps 45:6-7). He is now seen as being crowned with glory and honour (Heb 2:9) and is faithful as the Son in charge of God’s house (Heb 3:6), portrayed as a righteous king (Heb 7:2).

2.4.2 Inheritance and Sinners motif

ἐξῶσαι ἁμαρτωλοὺς ἀπὸ κληρονομίας (“thrust out sinners from the inheritance”, Ps Sol 17:23). In Hebrews, the “Son” is the one who was appointed as “heir of all” (κληρονόμον πάντων, Heb 1:2). He hates what is wrong (Heb 1:9, quoting Ps 45:6-7) and has been set apart from sinners (Heb 7:26). However, he is also the one who leads to salvation (Heb 2:10;

14 “Die größte Wirkung und Bedeutung für das Christentum aber erlangte Ps 2 dadurch, daß er eine der Quellen war für die Hoheitstitel ‘Messias’ und ‘Sohn Gottes’” (Maiberger 1988, 118).

9:26; 10:12) and purifies people from their sins (Heb 2:11; 10:14). An appeal is made to the readers of Hebrews not to be stubborn as their ancestors were (in the words of Ps 95, quoted in Heb 3:8ff, 4:3,5), so that their hearts are not evil and unbelieving and finding themselves turning away from the living God (Heb 3:12). They should not be deceived by sin and become stubborn (Heb 3:13). God made a promise that they may receive the “rest” that he spoke about (Heb 4:1). Their ancestors, who did not follow this promise and obeyed it, received the punishment that they deserved (Heb 2:2). The teaching of eternal judgment is a familiar part of the first lessons of the Christian message (Heb 6:2). Those who oppose God will have to deal with the coming Judgment and the fierce fire that will destroy them (Heb 10:27).

2.4.3 Righteousness and Righteous King motif

ἀφηγήσεται ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ κρινεῖ φυλάς λαοῦ (“he shall lead in righteousness and he shall judge the tribes”, Ps Sol 17:26); καὶ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς δίκαιος διδασκὸς ὑπὸ θεοῦ ἐπ’ αὐτούς (“he shall be a righteous king”, Ps Sol 17:32). The author of Hebrews portrays Jesus as a “king of righteousness” (Heb 7:2) based on the order of Melchizedek. He rules over his people with justice (Heb 1:8, quoting Ps 45:6-7). God will take revenge, will repay, and will judge his people (Heb 10:30) if they are disobedient. However, those who endure the suffering, punishment and tests will reap the peaceful reward of a righteous life (Heb 12:11). It is after all God who is the Judge of all mankind (Heb 12:23) and who will judge those who are immoral and commit adultery (Heb 13:4).

2.4.4 Sons of God motif

ὅτι πάντες υἱοὶ θεοῦ εἰσιν αὐτῶν (“they are all sons of their God”, Ps Sol 17:27). In Hebrews, reference is made to Jesus who was made perfect through suffering in order to bring many sons to share his glory (Heb 2:10).

This does not imply then that the author of Hebrews made use of Ps Sol 17, but at the very least, it shows that the same theology was at work in both contexts. This theology was the seedbed in which such passages were messianically understood and christologically applied in terms of Jesus. Ps 2 became such passage. It is one of the Psalms that is the most frequently quoted or alluded to in the NT (cf. Maiberg 1988, 113). Some traces of the

use of Ps 2 amongst the early Jewish and Christian authors are to be found in the following:

- Ps 2:1-2 is quoted in 4Q174 [4QFlor]. It is the last in a list of seven quotations preserved on the Dead Sea fragment and is expanded upon with an added *Midrash*. It is also quoted in Acts 4:25-26 as part of the prayer prayed by Peter and John who refer to this quotation as the Holy Spirit speaking through the mouth of their father David. The introductory formula states that the author professes the normativity of Scripture by acknowledging that it is the Holy Spirit who spoke these words, but who does so through the mouth of the Lord's servant, David, their father. It is connected here with the conspiracy against the Lord's "holy servant Jesus". Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel were all aligned against the true kingdom of God (cf. Dalglisch 1984, 32).
- Verse 7 of Ps 2 is not quoted in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Maier 1996). The NT, however, quoted it three times explicitly, i.e. in Acts 13:33; Heb 1:5 and Heb 5:5. It is quoted in Acts 13:33 in connection with Christ's *resurrection*. It is interesting to note that the author of Hebrews uses this verse differently. He uses it with its formula of adoption in Heb 1:5 to indicate the veritable *sonship* of Jesus¹⁵ – "that he who came was not an angel but the divine Son" (Dalglisch 1984, 32). Jesus stands in a unique relationship of sonship with God. Furthermore, within the preceding context it became clear that this Son has been given an exalted status: he has been appointed heir of all things and the universe was made through him (1:2); he is the radiance of God's glory and is the exact representation of God's being (1:3); he sits at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven (1:3) and the name he inherited is superior to that of the angels (1:4). "God addresses the *enthroned* King as Son" in the words of Meier (1985a, 177). When the author of Hebrews quotes Ps 2:7 a second time in Heb 5:5, he then applies it in another sense. This time it is done to prove Christ's vocation to the office of High Priest and to connect the *High Priesthood* of Christ with Melchizedek. The golden thread that runs through all these applications, though, is that Ps 2:7 is applied in a *messianic* manner (cf. Rendall 1955, 215) and, more

15 Cf. Maiberger (1988, 117): "...der Sohnschaft im Mittelpunkt des Interesses".

precisely, in the sense of Christ's exaltation (cf. Attridge 1989, 53; Meier 1985a, 176).

- Possible allusions of Ps 2:7 are to be found during Jesus' baptism¹⁶ (Mt 3:17; Lk 3:22)¹⁷ and his temptations (Mt 4:3,6; Lk 4:3,9), as well as in the Nicodemus episode (Jn 1:49).
- A brief look at the post-Hebrews Christian tradition confirms the continuing importance of this Psalm. Ps 2:8-9 is quoted and alluded to in Rev 2:26-27 (where it is connected to the ruling of the nations by those who will overcome), and also in Rev 12:5 and 19:15. In the post-canonical literature, Ps 2:7-8 is further quoted in 1 Clement (*Romanos*) 36:4 and in Justin's *Dialogue* 122:6. A quotation from only verse 7 is also found in the Gospel to the Hebrews (fr.4) and again in Justin's *Dialogue* (88:8, 103:6)(McLean 1992, 67).

2.5 Taken from a "Testimony Book"?

The presence of two quotations in close proximity to each other, which occurs elsewhere in the literature as well, usually leads some scholars to assume that the authors took it independently from an existing so-called "Testimony Book". The thesis was mainly developed by Rendel Harris (1916; 1920) early in the previous century and provides an easy explanation for the phenomenon of combined quotations that are surfacing in other places in the early Christian literature as well. Heb 1:5-14 usually serves then, not only as an example, but also as prove that the author used such a Testimony Book. Both the combination of Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14, occurring also in 1 Clem 36 in this combination, as well as the list of quotations offered in Hebrews 1, are listed as prove for the viewpoint of a Testimony Book behind Hebrews 1 (cf., for instance, Harris 1920, 43-50; Synge 1959, 53-54; Montefiore 1964, 43-44; Grässer 1964, 208f; Schröger 1968, 43ff; Theissen 1969, 34-37; Hay 1973, 39; Rösen-Weinhold 2002, 182ff).

A number of factors are to be noted against the Testimony Book hypothesis. *Firstly*, no concrete proof of the existence of such a collection of proof texts from the first century A.D. has been found to date. *Secondly*, the combinations that exist and that are in agreement with each other are

16 *Contra* the assertions of Grässer (1964, 52 n.2) that this is unlikely, on the basis of different interpretation of the same quotation in Heb 5:5.

17 Possibly Heb 7:28 should also be added in this regard (cf. Maiberger 1988, 113).

limited. Very few of the same combinations occur and the same texts are not always used in the same manner.¹⁸ Note, for instance, how the author of Hebrews combined Ps 2:7 not only with 2 Sam 7:14 in Heb 1:5, but presents a completely different combination in Heb 5:5 where Ps 2:7 is combined with Ps 110:4. The same author, then, does not follow the same combination of texts. Even if one would assume that Ps 110 was part of such a list, how would it be explained that Hebrews uses verse 4 and not the well-known verse 1 in this instance? *Thirdly*, the mere fact of a list of quotations that is presented by an author does not necessarily mean that such an author used another list of proof texts. The early Christian authors identified some texts from the tradition¹⁹, but combined these known texts with other references that they identified themselves during their own scholarly and hermeneutical processes.²⁰ Lists would thus differ from author to author and would not follow a “Testimony Book” list, or order in such a list. These lists of quotations might, however, show similarities in methodology and presentation due to the sharing of traditions and to the common use of the hermeneutical methods of the day.²¹ *Fourthly*, one could assume that during the planning stages of an ancient author’s work, they might have made “notes”²² or “lists” of references for themselves. Many of these might actually have been “memory strings” that developed during the process of studying their Scriptures and interacting with each other, rather than written texts. Certain references would always be at hand in their memory when dealing with a particular topic.

The solution to these text combinations, alterations in the text forms and different ways of applying the same text – even by the same author – might

18 An argument based particularly on Ps 110:1 and used by Kistemaker (1961, 91f) against a Testimony Book.

19 *Contra* a Testimony Book along these lines, cf. Weiss 1991, 156.

20 Bateman (1995, 27) says quite rightly in this regard: “Hebrews 1 does not arbitrarily select OT passages. Rather, it uses passages that are exegetically and conceptually linked together to support a major theological point in keeping with the Christian community’s understanding of the teachings of Jesus and the apostles as well as the leading of the Holy Spirit”.

21 Cf. Bateman (1995, 25), “Consequently 4QFlor 1.1-19 and Heb 1:5-13 share similar first-century theological concepts to present a theological treatise to their respective communities”.

22 Similar Steudel (1994, 139) who suggests “Notizen”.

rather be found in the author's own creative use of his Scriptures²³, applying the known exegetical and hermeneutical methods of his day,²⁴ and working sometimes with a *Vorlage* that might have differed from those known to us today. The possibility of "...a liturgy, an order of worship, or a collection of hymns used before (or still in) the author's time" that might be standing behind the collection of texts presented in Hebrews 1-3, as proposed by M. Barth, is interesting but equally, if not more, difficult to prove and remains speculative (Barth 1962, 73).

3. Text-Critical Level

3.1 Readings of Ps 2:7

There are no alternative text readings amongst the Greek or Hebrew OT text witnesses (cf. Archer & Chirichigno 1983, 57). According to the critical edition of Göttingen (Rahlfs 1979), the LXX reading of Ps 2:7 shows no signs of textual variation in any of the existing witnesses. The same is true for the Hebrew readings. Two fragments amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls contain the text of Ps 2:7. Ps 2:6-7 is to be found in 3Q2 (3QPs)²⁵ and Ps 2:1-8 in 11Q7 (11QPs^c).²⁶ The readings agree exactly with our known Hebrew readings from the MT.

23 Cf. Meier: "The seven citations and their precise order fit too neatly into the schema of Hebrews 1 to be taken *en bloc* from a book of OT citations" (1985b, 530); cf. Motyer 1999, 13.

24 Cf. Motyer, "...something in common with the *gezerah shawah* principle" (1999, 21). Similar Barth (1962, 64), "His method is near the *haraz* ('string of pearls') method of the rabbis, which in turn seems to be reflected among the Qumranites by the collections of *Testimonia*". This means that it is a similar method, not that he used existing collections of *Testimonia*!

25 Extremely fragmented. Dated in the 1st cent. C.E. For the text, see Baillet, Milik & de Vaux (1962).

26 Dated in the 1st half of the 1st cent. C.E. For the text see Martinez & Tigchelaar (1998, 1182).

Ps 2:7 (LXX)	Ps 2:7 (MT)	Ps 2:7 (3Q2) / (11Q7)
διαγγέλλων τὸ πρόσταγμα κυρίου Κύριος εἶπεν πρὸς με υἱός μου εἶ σύ, ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε	אָסַפְרָה אֶל חַק יְהוָה אָמַר אֵלַי בְּנִי אֵתָה אֲנִי הַיּוֹם : יִלְדֶתיךָ	אָסַפְרָה אֶל חַק יְהוָה אָמַר אֵלַי בְּנִי אֵתָה אֲנִי הַיּוֹם : יִלְדֶתיךָ

The oldest textual witness to the LXX at this point concerns a Greek fragment that exists amongst the Chester Beatty Papyri and which contains the section from Ps 2:7.²⁷ According to Pietersma, little can be said about its affiliation because of its fragmentary state and brevity and that it seems unlikely that any variant readings here give evidence to Hebrew influence (Pietersma 1978, 38). The reconstructed text agrees with that of the previously reconstructed LXX reading, except for the known Hellenistic morphological alternative τῶ (πρόσταγμα) that is used in 2150 for the τό of the other witnesses (cf. Conybeare & Stock 1981).

Two interesting morphological features of ithacism are to be seen earlier in the fragment in Ps 2:1-2 – i.e. in the section that is quoted in Acts 4:25-26. Firstly the use of the *etha* in the place of the *epsilon*, e.g. ηφρυαχαν for ἐφρύαξαν, ημ[ε]λη[τησα κ]ηνα: παρησιισα[ν for ἐμελέτησαν κενά; παρέστησαν, [αρχοτ]ης for ἄρχοντες. Secondly the use of the *iota* or diphthong ει for the *etha*, e.g. παρησιισα[ν for παρέστησαν, γις for γῆς, συνηχθεισαν for συνήχθησαν.

There is a striking difference, though, in the readings *between the Greek and Hebrew* traditions with an added κύριος earlier in the Greek text, but not quoted here in Heb 1:5 and 5:5 (or in Acts 13:33). This is not preserved in 2150 but assumed in the reconstruction of the text there. The Hebrew, on the other hand, could be translated as: “I will declare the decree of the Lord. He said to me: You are my son. I have begotten you today” (Ps 2:7 MT / 3Q2:1). The Greek could be translated as: “Declaring the decree of the Lord: The Lord said to me: You are my son. I generated you today” (Ps 2:7 LXX). In all three places where Ps 2:7 is quoted explicitly in the NT (Acts 13:33; Heb 1:5 and 5:5) only the formula with the direct words of the Lord

27 Cf. Papyrus Chester Beatty XIV 2,7-8, i.e. no. 2150.

is quoted, so that it is not known which of these versions the NT authors knew or consulted. However, the words of Ps 110:1 jump to mind here: “The *Lord* said to my *Lord*”.

3.2 *Introductory formulae*

The quotation in Heb 1:5 is introduced by the words τίτι γὰρ εἶπέν ποτε τῶν ἀγγέλων, which is the beginning of a rhetorical question that ends in the next two quotations from Ps 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14. These two quotations are joined by the words καὶ πάλιν.²⁸ The subject of εἶπέν can only be God according to the preceding context (cf. Müller 1986, 234). In fact, the motif of God “speaking” here is striking, starting in Heb 1:1 with λαλήσας and in 1:2 with ἐλάλησεν.

In Heb 5:5 the quotation is introduced by the sentence: Οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς οὐχ ἑαυτὸν ἐδόξασεν γεννηθῆναι ἀρχιερέα, ἀλλ’ ὁ λαλήσας πρὸς αὐτόν. This follows as part of the author’s argument that no one can appoint himself, but that it is God who calls someone to the office of high priest, as with Aaron. So it is then also with Christ. God called him and the proof of this is found in the quoted words of Ps 2:7 which are interpreted as God’s institutional words for Christ’s appointment. The section from Ps 2:7 is simply quoted in both 1:5 and 5:5 without any commentary or further explanation.

3.3 *Alternative readings of Heb 1:5 and 5:5*

According to the text critical edition of NA27, there are no alternative readings in any of the known NT manuscripts regarding the text of this quotation in both Heb 1:5 as well as that of in Heb 5:5.

3.4 *Comparison between the readings of Ps 2:7 in Acts 13:33, Heb 1:5 and 5:5*

This author dealt with the quotation from Ps 2:7 before in the context of the first Pauline speech of Acts 13:33²⁹ and pointed out that “The Greek translation of the LXX is a complete, identical and true translation of the Hebrew, and the quotation in Acts 13 (as well as in Heb 1 and 5) agrees

28 Cf. also Heb 2:13a,b; 4:5; 10:30; John 19:37; Rom 15:10–12; 1 Cor 3:20.

29 Cf. Steyn (1995, 169-176) for a discussion on this quotation.

exactly with the text of the LXX.³⁰ A comparison of the readings looks as follows:

Ps 2:7 (LXX)	Acts 13:33	Heb 1:5	Heb 5:5
υἱός μου εἶ σύ, ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε			

The readings in Acts 13:33, Heb 1:5 and Heb 5:5 thus all agree with each other, having exactly the same reading as it is found in the reconstructed text of Ps 2:7 LXX.

3.5 Remarks regarding the Vorlage of quotation

The Psalm itself was known and combined in the early Jewish tradition with 2 Sam 7 and had messianic connotations. It is clear from Luke's quote in Acts 13 that this specific quotation from Ps 2:7 was known by the early Christian tradition. The quotation starts and ends at exactly the same point in Acts 13:33, Heb 1:5 and 5:5. The author of Hebrews could have found this quotation from Acts itself (which raises a question about literary dependency upon the Lukan writings), or both Acts and Hebrews could have found it from an early Christian tradition, maybe a pre-testimonium or pre-florilegium catena of texts. Alternatively, they could have been connected in the oral tradition and being known – especially after the existing combination as found in 4Q174 [4QFlor].

The text reading of Heb 1:5 and 5:5 agrees with that of Acts 13 on the one hand, as well as with the LXX reading of Ps 2:7, on the other hand, and which in turn, is an exact translation of the Ps 2:7 of the MT. The fact that the quotation reads the same in our known LXX versions, should not exclude the option that the reading also agrees exactly with that of the MT. More caution is necessary in this regard and both options – LXX and MT – should be kept open here (*contra* NA27; Lane 1998, *et al.*).

Ps 2:8 was probably already alluded to in Heb 1:2 (so Weiss 1991, 160). Meier (1985a, 177) pointed out the connection between Ps 2:8 (not quoted

30 Steyn 1995, 171. Also confirmed by Howard (1968, 208, 216) and the studies of Ahlborn (1966, 111) and Rösen-Weinhold (2002, 183).

in Hebrews) and Heb 1:2b with the references to “inheritance” (κληρονομίαν) and “possession” (κατάσχεσιν) in Ps 2:8 and the terse κληρονόμον πάντων of Heb 1:2b. Should it be accepted that this motif found its way from Ps 2 into Hebrews, then the implications lead to two aspects that need to be considered. Firstly, the choice of vocabulary and wordplay might point in the direction of the Greek Psalm, rather than that of the Hebrew. Secondly, potential influence raises questions about the fact whether the author of Hebrews knew only the quoted phrase from his early Jewish and Christian traditions, or whether he actually knew the broader context of the Psalm itself.

4. Hermeneutical Level

4.1 *Some remarks on the interpretation of the quotation*

The author used the quotation from Ps 2:7 in Heb 1:5 not only as his opening quotation to the list that follows, but also as the opening quotation to his work. It is presented as being a statement of God himself regarding the status of the Son. The quotations and allusions of Ps 2 in pre-Hebrews times, point to the fact that these words were probably not unknown to his readers. They would also remind his readers about the tradition of the temptation narrative, which dealt with the status of Jesus in the gospels.

The author of Hebrews started his document by saying that God spoke to them in these last days through the “Son”. The motif of the “Son” is picked up by the very first words that he would quote: *υἱός μου εἶ σύ*. The author of Hebrews used this quotation in a messianic sense as proof of the sonship of Jesus, which is confirmed by God himself,³¹ on the one hand, as well as that the Son has a higher status than the angels, on the other hand. It is thus interpreted and applied within the context of the Son’s exaltation and is therefore used in a messianic-christological sense.³² Hughes calls Ps 2:7 the “key Old Testament testimony” for the reference to sonship (Hughes 1979, 14).

31 Cf. Schröger (1968, 38), “Mit großer Selbstverständlichkeit bezieht der Verfasser den *υἱός* des Psalms auf den Messias Jesus”.

32 So also Müller (1986, 234), “Ps 2,7 wird also zur christologischen Argumentation herangezogen, und zwar im Rahmen zeitgenössisch möglicher messianischer Deutung”.

In Heb 5:5 the author applies the same quotation in connection with the high priesthood of Christ in order to prove that Jesus complies with the requirements for the highpriesthood. He links it with a quotation from Ps 110:4. The words “I became your Father,” refer to the verb which actually means, “to give birth to”. It certainly does not have this literal meaning in neither Ps 2 or in Heb 1:5 or 5:5, but rather means to institute someone in his office (de Villiers 1998). It was applied to the king as God’s son in Ps 2, but the author of Hebrews applies it to Jesus. This act by the author of Hebrews could be formulated in the following manner through the words of Girdwood: “When God appointed his Son, he did so in a much more glorious way than when he ever appointed any human priest” (Girdwood 1997).

Ps 2 is thus christologically applied in both contexts in Hebrews, serving as an example that early Christianity not only interpreted only the Prophets in this manner, but also the Psalms. In the words of Maiberger: “Unter diesem Aspekt ergab es sich geradezu wie von selbst, daß mit dem König und dem Gesalbten des Herrn in Ps 2 nur Jesus Christus gemeint sein konnte” (Maiberger 1988, 114).

5. Conclusion

1. It was established on the *tradition-historical level* that the author knew the quotation from Ps 2:7 via the tradition. There is clear evidence of quotations from this Psalm in the tradition. Apart from the fact that Ps 2:1 has been quoted in 4Q174, also the early Christian tradition pointed to the application of particularly Ps 2:7, of which Acts 13:33 is an explicit example. The author made here use of a text that already had messianic connotations. A “Testimony Book” hypothesis does not convince in explaining the quotation combinations with Ps 2:7. Firstly, because the author’s very own combinations differ in Heb 1:5 (combined with 2Sam 7) and in Heb 5:5 (combined with Ps 110(109):4). Secondly, the quotation is interpreted differently in the two instances where it occurs in Hebrews. Thirdly, there might possibly be knowledge of the broader context of Ps 2 by the author of Hebrews (e.g. Ps 2:8 in Heb 1:2b, and Ps 2:7 + Ps 110(109):3 with the *hapax legomenon*).
2. On the *text-critical level*, no differences were found between the readings of the MT, the Dead Sea Scrolls (3Q2, 11Q7), the LXX and the NT (Acts

13:33, Heb 1:5 and 5:5). It is a very short quotation and was most probably not quoted directly from a written text, but from the author's memory. This is not the case with all the explicit quotations in Hebrews. No commentary or further explanation on the quotation follows by the author – which is again not the same as with some of the other explicit quotations in Hebrews.

3. On the *hermeneutical level*, regarding the application and interpretation of the quotation from Ps 2:7 in Hebrews, a few aspects became clear. The position of this quotation within the author's work is important. He opens his document with the quotation from Ps 2:7 as the very first quotation, thus giving it a prominent position and emphasis, on the one hand, as well as referring to a well known quotation. This is the same theme of divine sonship that was used during Jesus' baptism and his temptation. This christological connection is further being built upon. The quotation in Heb 1:5 is combined with 2 Sam 7 by means of the key word "Son", so that both quotations are now applied to the status of the Son. In Heb 5:5 the connection is made with Ps 110(109):4 and Jesus identified as the true Davidic King-Priest. The author of Hebrews has thus built upon the early Jewish messianic and early Christian interpretations of Ps 2:7. Whereas the Gospels applied Ps 2:7 for the *earthly* Jesus, and Acts for the *resurrected* Jesus, Hebrews does so with regard to the *exalted* Jesus who now sits at the right hand of God.

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